**Graduate Cultural Psychology (56:830:633) Fall 2024**

**Class Meets Tuesdays 6:00 pm to 8:50 pm in Armitage Hall 205**

**Professor Office Hours Tuesdays during the last hour of class or by appointment**

Professor name: Andrew Abeyta, PhD

Professor email: Andrew.abeyta@rutgers.edu

Professors Office: Armitage 355

## Course Description and Goals

Drawing on psychological theory and research, Cultural Psychology examines how culture shapes fundamental ways people perceive and think about the world, how culture shapes lifespan development, how culture shapes self and identity, and how culture shapes motivation and emotion. This course emphasizes building cultural competence by focusing on the implications of cultural psychology for immigration, for sexuality and close relationships, for multicultural identities, for prejudice and discrimination, and for mental health and psychological practice. The goals of this class are as follows:

1. To identify and explain how psychologists define culture and describe the basic psychological functions culture serves.
2. To understand and explain how cultural variables relate to topics such as cognition, emotion, personality, the self, interpersonal relationships, psychopathology, stereotypes/prejudice, health, and social/intergroup conflict.
3. To enhance student's ability to discuss and communicate cultural psychology research.
4. To enhance students' ability to understand and think critically about real-world social issues (e.g., globalization, terrorism, politics, prejudice, and war) by applying insights from cultural psychology.

---

## Communication

**Email Communications**

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me throughout the semester with any questions or concerns you may have via Canvas messages or email. Depending on when you send your message, you can expect a response:

- Monday-Friday: within 24 hours (if between the hours of 8 am and 5 pm, it will likely be sooner).
- Weekend emails: I'll respond within 48 hours.
- Emails received between 5 pm and 7 am will likely not be addressed until the morning.
- Please send the email again if I do not respond within the above-listed time frame.

**Canvas Announcements**

I send regular (1-2 times per week) announcements via Canvas about reminders and changes. Please make sure your Canvas Notifications are set to alert you to new Announcements.

**Inclusivity**

I would like to create a learning environment that supports diverse thoughts, perspectives, and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.). To help accomplish this:

- If you have a name and/or set of pronouns that differ from those that appear in your official Rutgers records, please let me know. If you would like to have your name changed officially on Rutgers University–Camden rosters, please follow the Chosen Name Process. In addition, within the Canvas course site, the Rutgers Shout-Out tool allows you to type the phonetic spelling of your name and record the pronunciation of your name in a shared audio recording for me and fellow students.

- If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you. If you prefer to speak with someone outside of the course, the Dean of Students is an excellent resource.
- I (like many people) am still in the process of learning about diverse perspectives and identities. If something was said in class (by anyone) that made you feel uncomfortable, please talk to me about it.

## Format and Class Meetings

This class is in-person and does not offer an option to attend via Zoom. It is organized into weekly Modules. Each class session will be a mix of lecture and discussion. We will take a break after 1 hour. I will reserve the last 50 minutes as office hours- a time when you can meet with me to ask questions/seek guidance.

### Required Reading

Readings will be journal articles posted weekly on the Canvas page (see schedule below).

### Attendance

Attendance/participation, defined as showing up on time, staying for the duration of class, and participating in class discussions/activities. Attendance/participation is part of your grade for this course. Below are policies about attendance/participation:

- You are expected to come prepared by completing ALL required readings in advance and participating in class discussions/activities.
- You do not need to ask my permission to miss class and/or produce any documentation (like a doctor's note) to excuse an absence. You can miss up to 3 classes before your absences start negatively impacting your grade.
- When you are absent, it is your responsibility to read the assigned readings, review any material posted on Canvas, and ask peers for notes on what was covered in class.
- Contact me in advance or as soon as possible if you are unable to attend class for an extended period (e.g., illness, quarantine, family emergency) so that we can discuss a plan for succeeding in the class.

### Software for Assignments

Assignments can be submitted by typing into Canvas or uploading a file. I will not accept assignments submitted via email. Uploaded files must be in Microsoft Word format or PDF.

### Academic Integrity (cheating and plagiarism)

I expect you to follow Rutgers Policy on Academic Integrity and avoid cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration (getting answers on an assignment from a classmate and/or working together to complete an individual assignment), or otherwise passing off work that is not yours as your own. Punishment can range from loss of credit on assignment on minor or first-time offenses to suspension/expulsion for serious and/or repeated offenses.

## Assessment

| Grades will be determined as follows: | | Letter Grades: | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Attendance/Participation | 30% of course grade | A: | 89.5%-100% |
| Weekly Reaction Papers | 20% of course grade | B+ | 84.5%-89.5% |
| Final Project | 50% of course grade | B | 79.5%-84.4% |
| | 100% | C+ | 74.5%-79.4% |
| | | C | 69.5%-79.4% |
| | | F | Less than 69.4 ("D" is not a grade in the graduate program) |

**Weekly reaction papers:** These papers *should not be summaries* of the readings. Rather, they should reflect your careful thoughts about the information presented in the readings. Each paper should present one idea that extends beyond the readings. Each paper should be between 100 and 300 words. *This is very short, so you must learn to be concise and choose your words carefully.* There are different types of reaction papers that you could write:

- **Application:** Write about how a specific concept from the readings applies to real life. For example, the readings discuss numerous "effects" and "phenomena" (e.g., "mortality salience effect" and "existential isolation"). What are real-life examples of these effects?
- **Critique**: Articulate any problems or issues with theories or studies presented in the readings. Critique can be focused on design/materials but CANNOT exclusively focus on issues with sample/participants.
- **Study proposal:** Briefly explain a study that would test an idea you have inspired by the reading. It could be taking the research in a new direction or testing an untested assumption/idea from the reading. What would you manipulate (independent variable)? What would you measure (dependent variable)?

Papers must be uploaded to Canvas by 12:30 pm each Tuesday before class. Late papers will receive half credit.

**Final Project:** The final project is an individual presentation. You must propose an original research study testing a hypothesis inspired by a topic from the course. The research study can focus on any area in psychology (e.g., social psychology, cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, clinical psychology, etc.) but must contain a cultural element. **Each student will be required to meet with me (see schedule for deadline) to discuss and refine their topic.** The presentation should have the following:

1) an introduction where you introduce your topic, review relevant research, and state/justify your hypothesis
2) a method section where you explain the method and design of your research study, including sampling strategy, procedure, and materials
3) an anticipated results and discussion section where you explain what you expect to find and why the findings of the study are important

## Course Schedule

| | |
|---|---|
| Week 1: | Tuesday, September 3, 2024: Welcome to Cultural Psychology<br>**Reading due:** Course Syllabus |
| Week 2: | Tuesday, September 10, 2024: Research Methods in Cultural Psychology<br>**Reading due:** Week 2 Reading 1, Week 2 Reading 2, Week 3 Reading 3<br>Assignment due: Weekly thought paper 1 |
| Week 3: | Tuesday, September 17, 2024: Development and Socialization<br>**Reading due:** Week 3 Reading 1, Week 3 Reading 2, Week 3 Reading 3<br>Assignment due: Weekly thought paper 2 |
| Week 4: | Tuesday, September 24, 2024: Self and Personality<br>**Reading due:** Week 4 Reading 1, Week 4 Reading 2, Week 4 Reading 3<br>Assignment due: Weekly thought paper 3 |
| Week 5: | Tuesday, October 1, 2024: Cognition and Perception<br>**Reading due:** Week 5 Reading 1, Week 5 Reading 2, Week 5 Reading 3<br>Assignment due: Weekly thought paper 4 |
| Week 6: | Tuesday, October 8, 2024: Class Cancelled |
| Week 7: | Tuesday, October 15, 2024: Motivation & Emotion<br>**Reading due:** Week 7 Reading 1, Week 7 Reading 2, Week 7 Reading 3<br>Assignment due: Weekly thought paper 6 |
| Week 8: | Tuesday, October 22. 2024: Immigration and Acculturation<br>**Reading due:** Week 8 Reading 1, Week 8 Reading 2, Week 8 Reading 3<br>Assignment due: Weekly thought paper 7 |
| Week 9: | Tuesday, October 29, 2024: Navigating Multicultural Contexts<br>**Reading due:** Week 9 Reading 1, Week 9 Reading 2, Week 9 Reading 3<br>Assignment due: Weekly thought paper 8 |
| Week 10: | Tuesday, November 5, 2024: Morality and Religion<br>**Reading due:** Week 10 Reading 1, Week 10 Reading 2, Week 10 Reading 3<br>Assignment due: Weekly thought paper 9 |
| Week 11: | Tuesday, November 12, 2024: Mental and Physical Health<br>**Reading due:** Week 11 Reading 1, Week 11 Reading 2, Week 11 Reading 3<br>Assignment due: Weekly thought paper 10 |
| Week 12: | Tuesday, November 19, 2024: Sex and Close Relationships<br>**Reading due:** Week 12 Reading 1, Week 12 Reading 2, Week 12 Reading 3<br>**Assignment due:** Weekly thought paper 11, Last day for research proposal feedback meeting |
| Week 13: | Tuesday, November 26, 2024 -No Class Thanksgiving |
| Week 14: | Tuesday, December 3, 2024: Presentations |
| Week 15: | Tuesday, December 10, 2024: Presentations |
| Week 16: | Tuesday, December 17, 2024: Presentations |